

GUIDELINES FOR  
FACULTY APPOINTMENTS, TENURE AND PROMOTION

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## 1. PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

1.1 This document establishes guidelines (the *Department Guidelines*) for making initial appointment to the faculty, conferring permanent tenure to faculty, promoting faculty to a higher rank, retaining faculty who are not tenured, and conducting post-tenure review.

1.2 The *Department Guidelines* are subordinate to those established by the college (the *College Guidelines*), the university and the university system.

## 2. CRITERIA FOR INITIAL APPOINTMENT

2.1. Candidates for initial appointment to any title in the academic professional track must have met the following requirements:

- a. First, they must have credentials appropriate to the title and consistent with SACS COC rules for accreditation.
- b. Second, if teaching general education or baccalaureate courses at the undergraduate level they must hold a doctorate or master's degree in the teaching discipline or master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).
- c. Third, if teaching graduate and post-baccalaureate course work they must hold an earned doctorate or terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline. In the College of Liberal Arts, faculty in the lecturer position should not be assigned to graduate courses. Faculty in instructional titles require the approval of the Dean to teach graduate level courses.

2.2 Candidates for initial appointment at the rank of assistant professor must have met the following four requirements:

- a. First, they must have earned their PhD by the first effective day of their initial appointment to the faculty. If this condition is not met, their appointment becomes a one-year terminal appointment. In such cases, the department head will notify the faculty member of this fact in writing, within two weeks after the first effective day of the initial appointment.
- b. Second, they must possess substantial promise for scholarly achievement in one or more areas within the discipline, as evidenced by prior research or by strongly supportive and detailed letters of reference, which address this point.
- c. Third, they must demonstrate substantial promise for high quality in teaching, as evidenced by prior teaching experiences or by strongly supportive and detailed letters of reference, which address this point.
- d. And, fourth, they must display a willingness to serve the university and the profession.

2.3 Candidates for appointment to the rank of associate professor must have met all the requirements for appointment at the lower rank. In addition, they must meet the following four requirements:

- a. First, they must have established a record and program of research and scholarly productivity as evidenced by publication of journal articles, books, chapters in books, or other relevant outlets.
- b. Second, they must have a record of high quality in teaching as evidenced by syllabi, other course materials, student evaluations, teaching awards, and/or direct faculty observations, as appropriate.
- c. Third, they must have a record of high quality in service to their department, university, and profession.
- d. And, fourth, they must show promise of continued growth likely to result (in due course) in promotion to the rank of full professor.
- e. Criteria and indicators for meeting these requirements are listed in section 3.

2.4 Candidates for appointment to the rank of full professor must have met all the requirements for appointment at the lower ranks. In addition, they must meet the following three requirements:

- a. First, they must have achieved a national or international reputation, readily evidenced, for example, by publications, citations, professional honors or awards, and evaluations by other nationally visible scholars.
- b. Second, they must have demonstrated high quality in teaching since their appointment to the rank of associate professor.
- c. And, third, they must have displayed the ability and willingness to serve in the governance of the department, college, and university, in the governance and conduct of the profession, or in other ways to use one's professional expertise to benefit student and public life.
- d. Criteria and indicators for meeting these requirements are listed below in sections 3 and 4.

### 3. CRITERIA AND PROCEDURE FOR PROMOTION OF ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL TRACK FACULTY

Academic Professional Track Faculty members being considered for promotion must meet the following minimum criteria as established by the College of Liberal Arts (See CLLA Academic Professional Track Faculty Guidelines).

#### 3.1 Criteria for promotion to Instructional Associate Professor for Faculty in Instructional Titles

- a. Normally service of at least 5 years in department.

- b. Demonstrated meritorious teaching as indicated by a combination of some of the following:
  - Strong teaching performance, as evidenced by peer evaluation, student satisfaction, and student outcomes.
  - Development of effective pedagogical methods and materials as evidenced by peer evaluation, student satisfaction, and student outcomes.
  - Evidence of very high quality in class preparation, interaction, and accomplishments.
  - Successful development of new courses or major revision of existing courses.
  - Effectively coordinating a multi-section course.
  - Demonstrated success in departmental undergraduate advising activities( may also be included as a service activity where appropriate).
  - Significant self-development activities leading to enhanced teaching effectiveness.
  - Receiving competitive funding for teaching.
  - Participation in University Honors or other programs for mentoring the professional development of students.
  - Offering high impact experiences for students (e.g., study abroad, critical thinking seminars, directing senior honors theses, etc.).
  - Selection for outstanding teacher awards.
  - Teaching related publications.
  
- c. Demonstrated meritorious service to the department as indicated by some combination of the following:
  - Serving actively on university, college, or department committees and task forces.
  - Serving as an advisor to student organizations.
  - Serving in administrative roles within the department.
  - Serving as an active member of the Faculty Senate.
  - Significant self-development activities that lead to enhanced service effectiveness.

### 3.2 Criteria for promotion from Instructional Associate to Instructional Full Professor

- a. Normally served 5 years in rank
  
- b. Demonstrated excellence in teaching as indicated by a combination of some of the following:
  - Outstanding teaching performance as evidenced by such measures as peer-evaluation, student satisfaction, and student outcomes.
  - Evidence of courses taught at a rigorous and challenging level, with recognized excellence.
  - Publication of instructional materials.
  - Developing a new course that fills an identified need in the curriculum.
  - Receiving external grant support for teaching/learning projects.
  - Receipt of awards for success in academic performance by the faculty member's students.
  - Significantly contributing to the professional development of students (e.g., working with the University Honors program).
  - Outstanding performance in departmental undergraduate advising activities (may also be included as a service activity where appropriate).

- Frequent offerings of high impact experiences for students (e.g., study abroad, critical thinking seminars, directing senior honors theses, etc.).
  - Selection for a teaching awards.
- c. Demonstrated **excellence** in service to the department, university, or profession as indicated by a combination of some of the following
- Chairing a university, college, or department committee or task force.
  - Sustained service as an advisor to student organizations.
  - Serving in key administrative roles within the department.
  - Serving as an officer in the Faculty Senate.
  - Sustained and significant self-development activities that lead to enhanced service effectiveness.
  - Serving as chair or other major leadership position on teaching related sessions or panels at regional, national or international meetings or conferences.

3.3 Procedure for all promotions in the Academic Professional Track will follow the same process and timeline as for tenure-track and tenured faculty in the Department. (These guidelines are consistent with the College Guidelines. See “Guidelines for Review, Tenure, and Promotion of Tenure-track and Tenured Faculty” for details on required components of the dossier and time table with these exceptions:

- a. Letters that articulate contributions made from outside the university or outside the department can be included, but are not required.
- b. in the cases of lecturers and faculty in instructional titles no research report is required in the dossier.
- c. The department review will be done by the Department Promotion and Tenure Committee.

#### 4. CRITERIA FOR TENURE AND PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Faculty members being considered for the award of tenure and promotion to associate professor are judged on the quality of their accomplishments in scholarship, teaching, and service to the university and the profession. Accomplishments of high quality are required. The criteria outlined below indicate commonly accepted indicators of quality in each area.

4.1 Scholarship. Candidates for tenure and promotion must have established a program of research consistent with the mission of a major research university and accepted within the discipline as evidenced by publication. Because styles of research vary widely within the discipline, assessments of the quality of scholarship must rest on multiple indicators. These indicators must offer clear evidence that:

- a. The candidate’s research program contributes to the body of knowledge of the discipline. This may be shown for instance by publication of a substantial number of one’s research articles in journals clearly established as the leading general journals in the field (these include the *American Journal of*

*Sociology*, the *American Sociological Review*, *Social Forces* and other highly ranked journals) or in other leading journals in the candidate's sub-field. Publications in other journals will be judged by the quality of the outlets as measured by their visibility within the substantive area, their acceptance rates, or other relevant indices. In the case of books and book chapters, similar evidence of the quality of the publication outlet will be considered, along with book reviews (if available). Candidates are strongly encouraged to consult with the department head and the tenure advisory committee appointed by the department head to develop a list of suitable publication outlets.

- b. The candidate's research program makes various contributions to the body of knowledge of the discipline as shown, typically, by the number of publications to which it leads. If the candidate's publication program is focused on articles, the number of publications during the probationary period should average between one or two a year, suggesting a minimum of six to twelve publications (or articles accepted for publication) before the award of tenure. With fewer publications, expectations rise that they are sole-authored works published in highly visible outlets. If the candidate's publication program is focused on books, the number of publications expected is less, but candidates should not count on gaining tenure based on the publication of one book only.
- c. The candidate is capable of taking a leading role initiating and completing research projects as shown by publications that (1) go beyond research conducted for the dissertation and (2) are sole- or lead-authored publications. Collaboration in research is often desirable and necessarily results in co-authored publications. Yet candidates for tenure and promotion should know that expectations about the overall number of publications required during the probationary period will increase with the proportion of co-authored to total publications, and they should take care to document their contribution to co-authored publications. Candidates are encouraged to solicit their co-authors' statements about relative contributions to publications.
- d. The candidate's research program promises to build the candidate's reputation as an influential scholar in the field. The primary evidence of the candidate's reputation rests on an explicit evaluation of the quality of candidate's work by external reviewers. Other evidence may include award of external peer-reviewed research grants or major research fellowships, award of prizes or other honors for published work, citation of publications, appointment to the editorial board of major journals, or other similar indices.
- e. The candidate's contributions were made during the probationary period. Works published prior to the onset of the candidate's probationary period are ordinarily not considered in the tenure and promotion process, with one exception. Candidates for tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor sometimes transfer several years of probationary service from another institution. In such cases, all work published during the transferable portion of the probationary period will be evaluated as if it had been done at Texas A&M University. In addition to that work, the candidate, nevertheless, must have a record of successful scholarly publication during the probationary period in residence at Texas A&M University.

4.2 Teaching. Tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor requires positive evidence of high quality and effectiveness in teaching. A record of high quality in teaching is established by the underlying quality of research that goes into course preparations and the ability to transmit the substance of course materials to students. The indicators of quality and effectiveness in teaching are various and not every indicator is appropriate to use in the evaluation of every case. Among the indicators considered the following are commonly used to provide clear evidence that:

- a. The candidate's teaching effectively presents current knowledge of the discipline in the areas of instruction. This is judged by (1) evaluation of course syllabi, required and supplemental reading lists, the rigor of examinations, term papers and other course projects, and other course materials; (2) peer-reviewed evaluations of classroom performance); and (3) student evaluations of courses.
- b. The candidate's teaching contributes to the range and depth of the department's curriculum as shown by the development of new courses or major revisions of existing courses, documented use of innovative teaching methods, the variety of course offerings at the graduate and undergraduate level, and other major contributions to the development of new instructional programs.
- c. The candidate's contribution to graduate training through the supervision of graduate student research at the master's and PhD levels as the chair or as a member of graduate student committees in this and other departments.
- d. The candidate's special contributions to the quality of teaching in the department and the discipline as shown by publication of text books or other widely adopted or acclaimed instructional materials, publication of articles on teaching in professional journals, award of external, peer-reviewed grants for teaching, award of prizes or other honors recognizing teaching performance, or other relevant evidence.

4.3 Service. Departmental policy is to minimize the service requirements for untenured assistant professors. Nevertheless, effective service is a necessary but not sufficient component in the promotion of candidates from assistant to associate professor with tenure. While opportunities for service vary widely, effective service makes a major contribution to the department's reputation and the quality of life for faculty, staff and students alike. It is expected that, when called on, faculty members will serve in a timely and collegial manner, within the university and the profession. Clear evidence of acceptable service is provided when:

- a. The candidate has contributed to the governance of the department, college and university by service as member or chair on standing or ad hoc committees, by holding elective offices on faculty committees and representative assemblies, by assuming responsibility for directing or developing new departmental programs, or by helping to direct or develop interdisciplinary programs.
- b. The candidate has contributed to the governance or conduct of the profession as shown by service as an elected officer of a professional association, as the chair or member of committees or task forces organized by a professional association, or as a chair or organizer of a professional conference.

- c. The candidate has contributed to the quality of student life as shown by acting as an advisor to student organizations, documented service as a student mentor, or other appropriate participation to promote student activities.
- d. The candidate has contributed to the quality of public life as shown by rendering professional service to government agencies, being invited to address public groups or giving interviews to the media on matters related to one's professional expertise, or receiving public awards in honor of one's professional service.

## 5. CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION TO FULL PROFESSOR

Promotion to the rank of full professor recognizes a career of distinguished achievement in the discipline. It is the highest honor that a department can bestow upon its faculty. Therefore, promotion to full professor must be recommended only when there is great certainty that it is warranted.

5.1 Scholarship. Candidates for promotion to full professor must have achieved a distinguished record of high quality publication. The hallmarks of such a record are (a) the influence of one's work on others within the discipline and (b) the receipt of professional honors and awards.

- a. There are two standard measures of the influence of scholarly work on others. One is the citation by others of the candidate's publications. The degree to which citations are adequately measured by standard indices will vary by the style and format of publication appropriate to one's research specialty. Care must be taken to allow for this variation. The other is an explicit evaluation of the influence of the candidate's work by external referees.
- b. Professional honors and awards are diverse in their form and nature. There are, nevertheless, some standard honors and awards that generally reflect one's standing in the discipline. Among these are (1) appointments as editor of scholarly journals, (2) positions on the editorial boards of scholarly journals and presses, (3) membership in grant review panels or professional advisory groups, (4) invitational lectures to professional groups, and (d) prizes or awards for scholarly achievement from professional groups.

5.2 Teaching. Candidates must have maintained an established pattern of high quality in teaching as evidenced by meeting the criteria for initial appointment to the rank of full professor.

5.3 Service. Candidates must have been active in promoting the intellectual development, growth, and visibility of the department as evidenced by meeting the criteria for initial appointment to the rank of full professor.

## 6. REVIEW STRUCTURE AND PROCESS

6.1 Tenure and Promotion Committee. Responsibility for evaluating candidates for tenure and promotion to associate and full professor and for promotion to instructional associate and full professor rests with the tenure and promotion committee. The committee is composed of all tenured faculty in the department, except that associate professors are eligible to deliberate and vote only on the candidacies of assistant professors. If academic professional track faculty are being considered for



promotion, the tenure and promotion committee consists of all tenured faculty and all academic professional faculty whose rank is higher than that of the faculty member under consideration for promotion. The committee is called into active service on three occasions: (1) to conduct a third-year review of progress toward tenure and promotion by untenured assistant professors, (2) to conduct a sixth-year review of untenured assistant professors going up for tenure and promotion (or a similar review for those who may be going up for an early tenure decision), (3) to conduct a formal review of those being considered for promotion to full professor, and (4) to conduct a formal review of those being considered for promotion within the academic professional track. When the committee is active:

- a. The department head appoints the chair of the committee from among the ranks of the full professors.
- b. The department head also solicits external reviewers of the candidate's scholarship in accordance with the *College Guidelines*. Nominations for external reviewers are made and approved by the tenure and promotion committee. The candidate may submit a list of persons to be considered as reviewers and may also submit a second list of persons who should not be considered as reviewers. At least one of the external reviewers should be drawn from the candidate's preferred list, if such a list is submitted.

6.2 Subcommittee Responsibilities. The department head and committee chair appoint three subcommittees of at least three members, with one designated to serve as the subcommittee chair. Each subcommittee is assigned to review either the scholarship, teaching, or service of the faculty members being considered for retention, tenure, and promotion in accordance with the criteria specified in these *Department Guidelines*. In the case of those in the Academic Professional Track, there are only two subcommittees: teaching and service.

- a. Subcommittee chairs are expected to interview each candidate in detail about the materials in their dossier relevant to the subcommittee's task.
- b. All members are expected to evaluate each candidate's dossier. Once the individual evaluations are complete, the subcommittee will meet to discuss each candidate's dossier.
- c. On the basis of their discussions, each subcommittee prepares a report for each candidate of the candidates' strengths and weaknesses in the area it examined. The subcommittee report is forwarded to the chair of the tenure and promotion committee.
- d. The promotion committee chair collates the sub-committee reports for each candidate and distributes the collated report for each candidate to all members of the tenure and promotion committee eligible to vote on each candidate.

6.3 Full Committee Review. No less than ten working days after the distribution of the collated report, the tenure and promotion committee chair convenes a meeting of the eligible members of the tenure and promotion committee to consider each candidate in turn. Before the meeting, it is expected that

each eligible member of the tenure and promotion committee will have read the functional sub- committee reports and personally reviewed each candidate's entire dossier.

- a. At that meeting, the eligible members of the tenure and promotion committee shall discuss and vote, by secret ballot, on recommending each candidate for retention, tenure or promotion.
- b. The committee chair takes notes of the discussion, duly recording the sense of the meeting. From those notes, the chair writes an overall report on each candidate.
- c. The chair distributes copies of the overall report for informational purposes to all tenure and promotion committee members eligible to vote on the candidates. The chair also distributes the complete report, consisting of the overall report and the three functional sub-committee reports, to the dean of the college, through the head of the department.

6.4 Initiation of the Committee Review Process. Reviews by the tenure and promotion committee will occur automatically for untenured assistant professors at the beginning of their third and sixth years of service. Any assistant, associate or instructional professor may request prior to May 1<sup>st</sup> that the tenure and promotion committee consider, in the next academic year, his or her case for promotion or tenure. That request must be made in writing to the department head.

## 7.CRITERIA FOR RETENTION OF UNTENURED FACULTY

7.1 The accomplishments of all faculty are reviewed annually.

7.2 Appointments at the rank of assistant professor are without tenure and are probationary in nature. All contracts during the probationary period are for a term of one year.

- a. The department may renew or terminate probationary contracts during each and every year of the probationary period. Decisions whether to renew the contracts of assistant professors are based on annual assessments of the faculty member's performance and progress toward the award of tenure.
- b. The tenure and promotion committee conducts detailed annual reviews at the third and sixth years of the probationary period. The department head conducts annual reviews in other years after reviewing the faculty member's progress in consultation with the annual review committee.
  - o Department head reviews will be based on information provided in the candidate's annual review forms augmented, if required, by an interview with the candidate.

- The primary aim of the review is to assess the candidate's progress toward tenure and promotion and to give guidance about how the candidate can present the strongest possible record when the coming up for tenure and promotion. Steady progress toward this goal is expected. The department head will advise the candidate in writing of the results of this review, to include any recommendations for strengthening the candidate's case.
- The contracts of candidates for tenure who fail to make steady progress toward tenure and promotion in the areas of scholarship, teaching and service may not be renewed.
- If the department head believes renewal is not warranted, a special meeting of the tenure and promotion committee—that is, all tenured faculty eligible to deliberate and vote on the candidate—will be called to consider and decide the matter. If agreed upon by a majority vote of the tenure and promotion committee, the department head will notify the faculty member in writing of the decision not to renew the contract.

c. A non-tenured faculty member whose contract has not been renewed may appeal the decision on the basis that the decision was made in violation of academic freedom of the individual or for an illegal reason. Any appeals are made in accordance with college, university and system policies and procedures.

## 8. REVISION OF THE TENURE AND PROMOTION GUIDELINES

The *Department Guidelines* are subject to periodic review. All voting faculty are eligible to participate in deliberation and vote on any revisions. Any changes in guidelines will take effect in the next academic year.